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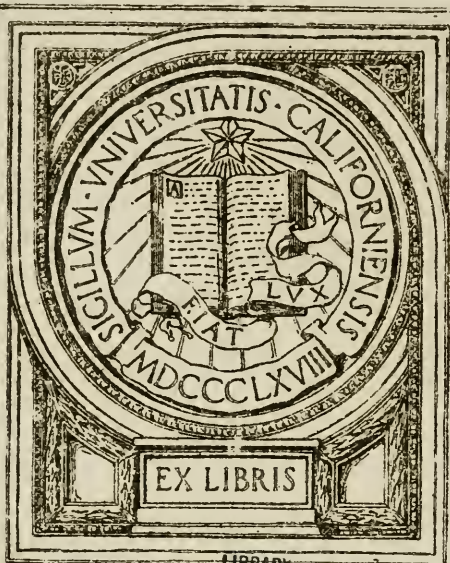
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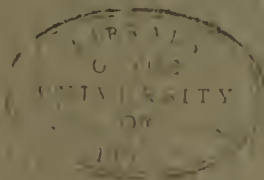


EX LIBRIS

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*NEW BOOKS
FOR OLD*



For up

ST. LOUIS PUBLIC LIBRARY
— ST. LOUIS, MO. —

NEW BOOKS
FOR OLD

By Mary E. Wheelock
Chief of the Binding Department
St. Louis Public Library



DATE OF
ACQUISITION

ST. LOUIS
1916

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LIBRARY
SCHOOL

TO THE
LIBRARY

1911

NEW BOOKS FOR OLD

By MARY E. WHEELOCK,

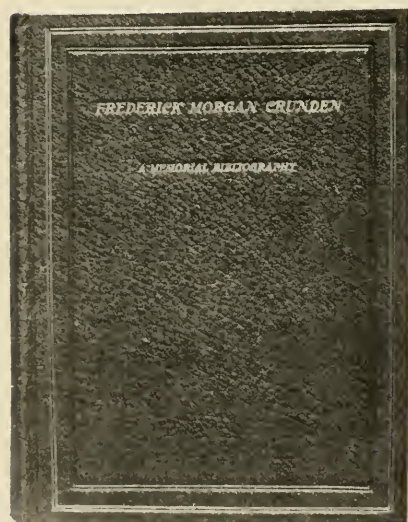
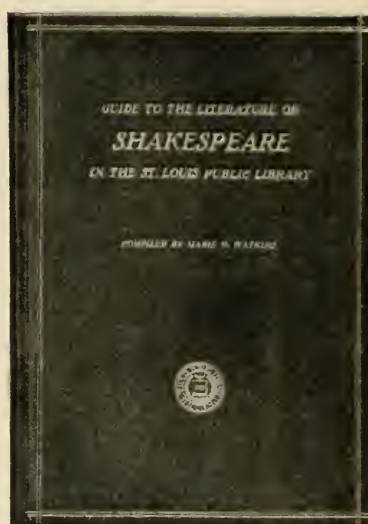
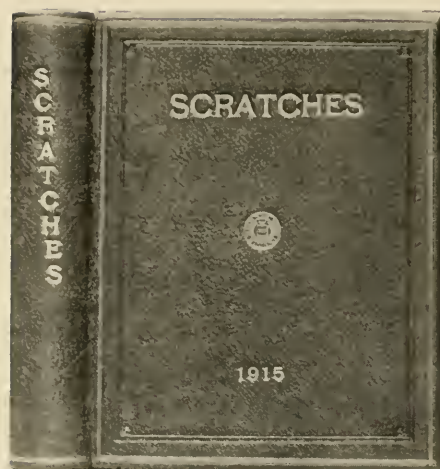
CHIEF OF THE BINDING DEPARTMENT.

With the rapid increase of public libraries, the difficulty of keeping books in repair has compelled the attention of librarians everywhere, and much progress has been made towards practical binding. But in actual intelligent, friendly co-operation between libraries and binders, the last few years mark an important period, with a corresponding improvement in methods as a result of such co-operation.

Time was, a few years ago, when the St. Louis Public Library was served by four or five binderies, though from the very nature of the case it was unable to direct or control its work in any one of them to any very satisfactory extent. Some binders did one class of work especially well, and others excelled in other points. But no binder could be quite sure of the amount or character of the work that would be sent to him, and so he was not justified in increasing his stock of material, even when he was able to buy in large quantities at an advantage, because of the risk of having it left on his hands and the uncertainty of being able to utilize it for other classes of customers. Nor did he feel justified, from the standpoint of the quantity and regularity of the work, in making a study of special methods and processes suited to library needs, nor in installing special machinery, involving in either case added expense for which there was no provision in his contract.

Furthermore, the Library can not guarantee a definite amount of work, and this was another disadvantage with which the binders had to contend.

On the part of the Library, the quality of work done by the different binderies was not uniform, and details such as guarding first and last sections, style of cloth joints, styles of lettering, etc., had to be gone over with the several binders individually, sometimes with indifferent results.



MOROCCO BINDINGS, DESCRIBED ON PAGE 41.

Some binders were prompt in returning work, while others whose work was apt to be superior, were much slower, perhaps because other work crowded the Library binding aside. Books for which there was urgent call seldom could be had without delay.

Above all, the quality of materials could not be supervised, although the binders followed the general specifications closely. Intelligent co-operation between the binders and the supervisor was difficult because of the remoteness of the binderies.

Rosy tales of money saved by binderies owned and operated by libraries were eagerly listened to, for few things appeal more strongly to librarians than the possibility of saving money. There had been for



BINDERY; LARGER ROOM

some years a rather indefinite plan for a bindery, and the time came when conditions seemed to warrant an investigation to determine the initial expense of installing a plant and the advantages to be derived from its operation by the Library. After some correspondence with other libraries operating binderies, one of our former binders was engaged as foreman, a careful estimate of actual needs was made and a few pieces of machinery and some other equipment were assembled in a basement room 30 by 40 feet, opening on the court. A staff of four was at work late in January, 1913, and the force was gradually increased until at the close of the first year it consisted of thirteen persons.

1 to 4, Mending and Sewing Tables; 5, Stabbing Machine; 6, Press for Sawing in backs of books; 7 to 9, Standing Presses; 10 to 17, Forwarding Tables; 18, Finishers' Tables; 19, Embossing Machine; 20 to 22, Job Backers; 23, Board Shears; 24, Power Cutting Machine; 25, Gluing Machine; 26, Hand Cutting Machine; 27, Punching and Eyeletting Machines; A, Tables; B, Shelving; C, Men's Lockers; D, Women's Lockers; E, Foreman's Desk.

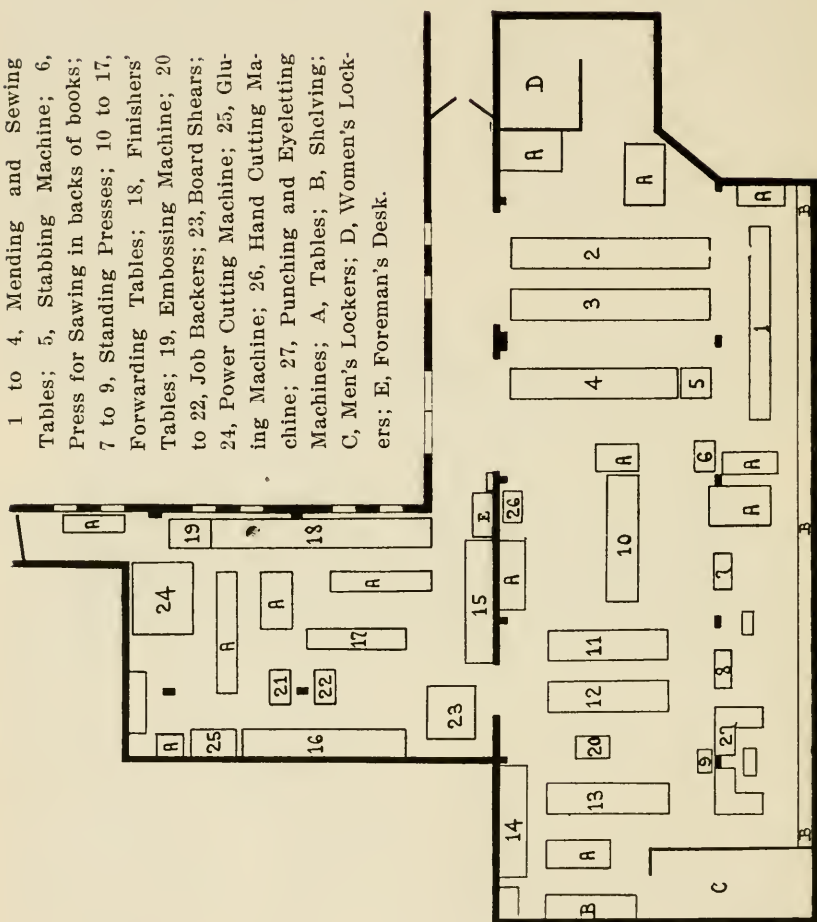


DIAGRAM OF BINDERY.

EQUIPMENT AND STAFF.

The arrangement of the quarters is shown clearly on the accompanying plan.

The cost of the original equipment, not including the fitting of the room and binding supplies, was but little more than \$300, for it was only experimental. By careful management the work was gradually systematized, and before the end of six months a considerable saving was realized.

Early in 1914 the Board of Directors authorized an expansion of the bindery quarters to include a large room adjoining the space originally occupied, in order to provide more favorable conditions for the increasing volume of work and for the addition of new members to the bindery staff.

The present equipment includes the following, purchased as needed and as the binding appropriation permitted:

Sheridan cutter (second hand).....	\$100.00
Electric motor for cutter.....	65.00
Perforating machine (second hand).....	49.00
Board shears	135.00
Gluing machine with motor.....	225.00
Embossing press	150.00
Standing press (second hand).....	15.00
Standing press (new).....	72.00
2 Stuart's finishing presses.....	24.00
3 job backers (second hand).....	55.00
65 brass bound press boards.....	177.00
Type	276.00
18-inch card cutter.....	10.00
16-inch wringer	7.00
6 sewing benches	14.00
Gas stoves, glue pots, binders' hammers, shears, etc.	28.00
Cost of present equipment.....	<u>\$1,402.00</u>

A plough-press, a hand-power cutter, finishing tools and other tools, the property of the bindery foreman, Mr. Haeckel, and the donation of the partial outfit of her private bindery by Miss Mary E. Bulkley, complete the equipment.

The bindery staff now numbers twenty-three persons—fourteen women and nine men. The average output per month during the year, including all books, large and small, has been more than 3,260 volumes, besides job work amounting to more than \$400 in labor and material.

GENERAL POLICY.

The bindery is an outgrowth of the need for closer co-operation between library and binder. Questions of materials and methods are decided by the department-head and the bindery foreman, and supplies are purchased in sufficient quantities to last for one to three months at a time, often directly from the manufacturers on favorable terms.

If it seems worth while to try some materials which have not been tested, small quantities are bought, the Library serving as a laboratory for such tests. Records are kept of certain books upon which some new method has been tried, and the books are looked up after a time to see how the experiment has worked. This plan is followed also in connection with testing certain details of binding. The books that are returned to the Binding Department for slight repairs, or as worn out, give opportunity for determining whether the methods or materials in general are satisfactory with the various classes of books. A previous library experience of several years elsewhere enables the department-head to understand better the Library's needs and forecast with some accuracy the kind of treatment that certain classes of books are likely to receive at the hands of readers. This familiarity with the situation from the library standpoint is of constant service in selecting materials and in other ways.

To bind a book better than is necessary for its probable use, is no economy. Unnecessary expenditure, either in methods or materials, is merely waste, and the prevention of such waste is one of the possibilities where a library bindery exists. A book should

be bound, as nearly as may be, so that under ordinary conditions the cover and sewing shall last as long as the paper is respectable.

In Holmes' verses about "The Wonderful One-Hoss Shay" the Deacon's general specifications for the construction of that vehicle apply admirably to book-binding:

"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
That the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way to fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

It is a regrettable fact that there are some books, notably those printed on heavy or calendered paper, which require more than their share of care and expense in rebinding, and whose durability after all is uncertain.

Good taste in binding is as much an obligation which the Library owes to the users of the books as good taste in the selection of the furniture and decorations of the building. But unlike these, instead of having an initial expense in the original equipment which is to last for years or may be increased as conditions demand or as funds are available, the amount of binding grows each year with the increase and use of the Library's collection of books, and a proportionate increase in the binding fund is imperative or the library suffers at one of its chief sources of supply. As all the books are represented in the catalogue and the newer books are listed in the late library bulletins, the readers who are asking for them are not always satisfied with the information that they are "out of repair" or "have gone to the bindery."

Rarely if ever will there be a surplus in the binding fund even with the most careful calculation, and that there will be more work than it will be possible to accomplish with the money available for binding is more than likely. A consistent course may, however, be attempted, which includes in its general aim dura-

bility, economy and artistic appearance, and to some extent combines all these features.

Variety in style and color is an important consideration in this connection, making it possible in some small degree at least, to give books an individuality even in their second bindings. Often this individuality in bindings may serve as an aid, however slight, in recognizing the book quickly on the shelves. This policy is directly opposed to the custom followed to some extent a few years ago, of making library bindings uniform, or of binding each class of books in a different color—children's books in red, for example. This new policy of variety does not apply, of course, to volumes of sets nor to files of periodicals and continuations, which obviously should be bound uniformly, though with whatever variations may be deemed advisable in the case of individual sets.

HOW BOOKS ARE DAMAGED.

The sight of the ambulance trucks bearing the poor disabled books to the book hospital after the desperate onslaught of the readers, is suggestive of the ravages of war.

It is remarkable how quickly valuable things may be damaged or even ruined; the time required to repair the injury is often quite out of proportion to the damage done. A cut or bruise on the hand is carefully attended to by Mother Nature without much thought on our part, but these injuries to inanimate things often require considerable care and skill. Erasing pencil marks, mending tears, removing ink-spots and other spots, sometimes even washing the soiled leaves; the removal of notices which were pasted in the books in other days with the vain hope of lessening the trend toward destructiveness on the part of some users of the library—all these are necessary to the respectable appearance of the books to be bound.

The use, or misuse, of the books by some of the children is one of the most discouraging aspects from

the point of binding and repair. True, children who have no clean, comfortable places in which to sit and read need the books more than those who are more fortunate. And it must be said that not all of these children are deliberately destructive. But for them the too free access to books may not be an unmixed blessing, and the expense of maintaining a collection of children's books in a section of the city convenient to these classes of readers must be far out of proportion to the number served.

In this Library the use of envelopes in which advertising matter is received through the mails, helps to protect the books en route between the Library and



FOND OF BOOKS

the homes. And when the suggestion that the book is clean or new or that it would be spoiled by the rain accompanies the use of the envelope, the child may acquire some feeling of responsibility in the matter. But if the book is returned in bad condition and a fine is charged or his card is withheld, or both, he is likely to feel a keener sense of his obligation than before.

A story-hour campaign of education bearing on the care and treatment of books might be worth trying. Children who have never bought a book nor owned one, and to whom the library books are as free as water, cannot be expected to be interested in making

them last as long as possible. When a child returns a book, soiled and torn, with pencil marks as evidence that it contributed to little brother's pleasure also, the desk assistant rarely has time to ascertain these facts and call the offender to account for the injury. Another book is therefore issued to be treated in the same way.

Impossible as it may seem, the injury to books as they are handled and shelved in a library may be as real and as serious as that inflicted by the thoughtless patron outside. Care of books is as important



TWO MORE BOOK-LOVERS

as repair, and many a dollar might be saved if this were thoroughly understood. The lack of proper book-supports or the improper use of them; the crowding of the shelves so that an attempt to take a book from the shelf results in severe strain to the top of the back if it does not actually tear it; the piling of books one on top of another on trucks or on tables, until the whole pile topples over—these are some of the things that hasten the books to the hospital just as surely as legitimate use.

Books should be placed on the trucks in the same way and with as much care as on the shelves—never on the front edges, for this strains and weakens the joints, sometimes actually forcing the book out of the cover.

The dropping of books, particularly of large or heavy ones, is liable to injure seriously the sewing or the backs, though the broken stitches or weakened joints may not be evident at first.

A visit to a well-ordered bindery serves to impress one with the regard paid there to the proper handling of books. In the course of binding each book is handled from thirty-five to forty times, which means constant care where 4,000 to 5,000 books are in the bindery at one time. The arrangement of piles of books so that the backs alternate, first to the right and then to the left, or at a slight angle to prevent toppling, is a very simple matter, and the principle is worthy of adoption in any place where books are handled in quantities.

Occasionally the methods of the libraries themselves have been known to prove detrimental to the books, although they may have been prompted by the desire to protect them. Some years ago the small library of extremely limited appropriation looked upon the perforating stamp bearing the name of the library somewhat as the homeless working girl might look upon diamonds and fine furs—as a luxury for the large, rich library, impossible of attainment by others. The protests from users of libraries in recent years regarding the partial mutilation of the leaves by these stamps have had a tendency to decrease their use. In the opinion of some, the perforator is of undeniable value for expensive or illustrated works, provided the perforation can be made without defacing the reading matter or ruining the details of the illustrations. But for ordinary books of poor quality of paper its use is a positive detriment in many instances. The title page and first and last pages of the text are most often selected as suitable places for perforation. As it

happens, these are the very leaves subjected to the hardest wear, and when they are perforated the question of repair is all the more difficult or hopeless.

Where it is desirable to use the perforator, it would seem that certain pages farther towards the middle of the book might be selected with no lessening of the value of the ownership mark.

On discovering a loose leaf in a book the assistant sometimes slips it out so that the edges extend beyond the covers, for fear that it may be overlooked in repairing the book. Valuable books have been seriously damaged by this misplaced care, and the repair of others is made more difficult as a result of tears and actual mutilations while such books are in transit to the repair division. A slip laid in the book where there is a torn or loose leaf should be sufficient to insure proper attention.

In handling a new book which is more or less reluctant to open flat, the average person, perhaps, will force it so that it may be more easily held open, thereby injuring the sewing, or the backing, or both, in frequent instances.

We are told—and there is considerable truth in the statement—that if new books are opened properly when first received, a few leaves at a time, alternating back and front (every librarian knows the process), the early breaking of the backs is avoided. Supposedly this would apply only to well-bound books.

It would be interesting to know in how many libraries this ounce of prevention is a thing of regular practice, and to know what appreciable advantage results in the way of prolonging the lives of the books in their original bindings.

PAPER AND EDITIONS.

The responsibility for a large proportion of our binding troubles is traceable to the inferior grades of paper used in the making of books since wood-pulp has been so largely substituted for rags. The paper in the books made prior to the use of wood-pulp was a marvel of good quality, as it seems to us now;

there was no necessity then for special methods of sewing, everything being sewed "straight on" or "two on," through the folds of the sections; and there was little trouble, presumably, with leaves wearing loose on the folds. In recent years, however, between the spongy paper that cuts so easily with the sewing, and the calendered and other heavy papers that require so much extra care, the problem of sewing has claimed the serious consideration of all binders of library books.

Where titles to be purchased come in but one edition, the books are usually bought regardless of paper. But when more editions than one are available there are frequently other claims for consideration besides that of paper—editor, illustrator, type, cover, or price, for example.

Notwithstanding the variable quality of paper in many of the inexpensive editions of copyrighted books, issued by various publishers, they are a distinct boon to libraries, large and small, whose book funds are inadequate. In many cases the paper is as good, or nearly as good for library use, as that in the regular editions, although the test of time might give a verdict in favor of the more expensive editions. But so much of the popular fiction is worn out in three to five years that the question of deterioration as affected by time hardly enters into the consideration.

A. C. McClurg & Company of Chicago, and probably other large book dealers, furnish lists of some of these editions, containing titles which are comparatively well bound and suited to library purchase.

Ordinarily, books having narrow margins are undesirable for public libraries because of the difficulty of re-sewing without encroaching too closely on the print. Many titles in standard fiction and other old copyrights have been published in "handy volume," "India paper" or "pocket" editions. These are admirably suited to the purposes for which they are published, namely, for the use of individuals desiring a volume of light weight to read on street-car or train,

or for an inexpensive and compact book for one's private library. But the binding is seldom better than in the ordinary fiction, and not only do the narrow margins increase the binder's difficulties, but after the book is bound the margin of perhaps one-fourth or one-half of an inch is out of proportion to the printed page, and gives the impression that the binder has been careless in trimming the edges.

However, there are various possible uses in the library for these small editions, such as for vacation loans, where several books are issued to one person for a period of several weeks or months in summer, and in many instances are taken on vacation trips; for traveling-library loans by parcel-post, or for hospital loans. In cases like these the objectionable narrow margins would not be considered to outweigh the advantages of light weight and compactness.

METHODS.

Detailed records of the methods in use in the modern library binderies of this country are conspicuous by their absence. None is known to the writer except the volume in Mr. Dana's series and the material formerly issued by the Pacific Library Bindery of Los Angeles

It is to be regretted that the publication of *Bindery Talk*, which was edited at the latter institution, and which contained a series of articles on binding, along with other very useful and practical material, has been suspended, presumably for lack of interest and support on the part of libraries throughout the country.

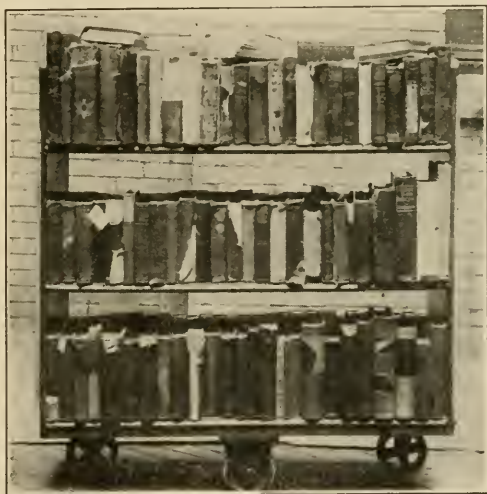
It is hoped, therefore, that this article on binding procedure may invite contributions and exchanges of methods among library binderies, commercial and otherwise, which shall result in placing at the disposal of all binders the working details of practical up-to-date bookbinding for libraries.

It will be obvious that in the preparation of this report, the average librarian and the possible general

*The above was written before the appearance of Mr. A. L. Bailey's book on *Library Book-binding* (White Plains, 1916).

reader have been in mind rather than those librarians and specialists in binding who have made a careful study of the intricacies involved in making over books.

Presumably the library assistant in charge of the binding not only is familiar with the needs of the library, but has some general knowledge of binding methods, although she must concede to the binder the skill and ingenuity to adapt the details of his work to library requirements. On the part of the binder, the adjustment of his methods to library conditions is of first importance and necessitates continual vigilance.



"BEFORE TAKING"

The efficiency of the bindery is in a considerable degree dependent on the proper preparation of the books, periodicals, pamphlets, etc., which are to be bound. A bindery operated by a library has some advantages over the usual commercial bindery. With a little planning, the books may be furnished for binding in similar lots and always with some duplicate titles. Anticipating this frequent duplication, leather backs for those books of which the library buys numerous copies may be lettered in advance on the embossing press, and the cloth covers of small books may be made and lettered in the same way

before they are put on the books. Where it is possible to cut materials in quantities, there is a considerable saving in labor, which represents about two-thirds of the cost of the book. The purchase of materials in quantities, sometimes at special prices, results in a substantial saving in the course of a year.

A well-bound book represents a degree of care and detail in the making which only those directly concerned with binding can appreciate. While in general the books are treated much alike, there are often special conditions which require special treatment.

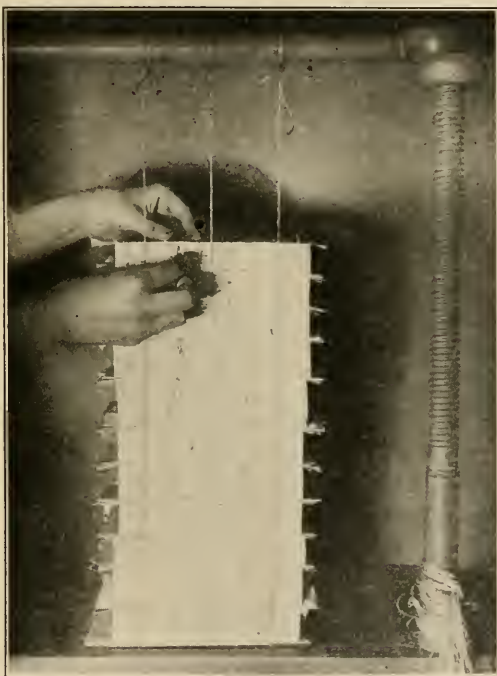
As far as practicable, the different classes of work—the fiction and other books of medium size, the reference books, small juveniles, music, magazines, books for which there is urgent need, etc.—are kept in separate lots, as they pass through the successive processes in the bindery. This arrangement makes it possible usually to locate a book for which there may be an unexpected call, or enables the reference assistant to satisfy an exigent patron by producing a desired book, even if it is in an unfinished condition.

SEWING.

For years binders of library books have struggled with the problem of sewing. Formerly there was the complaint that the books were used too long and mended too much before they were sent to be bound, so that if they were to be sewed through the sections—"straight on"—the necessary stripping of the folds with paper resulted, after the sewing was finished, in a "high back," that is, a back thicker than the front edge of the book.

Sewing by the whipstitch method, as done by many binders, was apt to tear the inner margins if the books were forced open—which was a common occurrence because they seldom opened well, the stitches being uneven in depth and the sections being too thick, as a rule.

The sewing machine was employed by certain binders, each section being stitched flat along the inner margin with stitches varying from 1-4 to 1-2 inch in length and the sections being sewed regularly. Provided the sewing was well done, this was among the more satisfactory methods of dealing with books in bad condition or printed on bad paper, until overcast-sewing, with perforations to insure even stitches, came into use.



A SEWING-BENCH OF BOOKS IN PROCESS OF SEWING. THE EXTENDING EDGES OF END PAPERS INDICATE THE SEPARATION OF THE DIFFERENT BOOKS.

The earlier examples of modern overcast-sewing were only partially satisfactory because the perforations, being too close together, weakened the leaves at the point of sewing and they were easily torn away, like postage stamps. The usual distance between perforations for present-day overcast-sewing is about 1-2 inch.

Several variations in the stitches, adapted to the quality and condition of the paper, are in use in the bindery of the St. Louis Public Library. A flat opening is an essential feature, not only as a matter of convenience, but because, unless the book is easily held open, someone is likely to force it back, perhaps ruining the binding thereby. Books of heavy or stiff paper require special care, smaller sections being taken up in sewing.

Small or thin books and pamphlets with good margins are "stabbed," a simple yet strong method of sewing. Pamphlets in single sections are sewed through the fold of the section to a strip of duck, and fastened securely to the covers, which in case of thin pamphlets are usually of pressboard.

Where conditions permit it, section-sewing is still in good standing, although the stress laid on other methods and the large proportion of books which it is necessary to sew otherwise leave little to be said in regard to this primal method.

All music is sewed by sections and on tapes, to insure an absolutely flat opening for the music rack—the one class of books on which tapes are used.

Cords and Tapes.—Practical binders seem to agree pretty generally that the emphasis which in recent years has been placed on the use of tapes in sewing is somewhat out of proportion to the benefits realized. The intelligence and care necessary to produce desired results with tapes usually make as good a book or better if proper cords are used and the book is properly forwarded; for no amount of care in sewing will make up for a lack of intelligence in forwarding.

The cords lie close in the sawcuts as the book is sewed, and the flexible glue which is applied to the back works in around the soft cords. If the paper is of good or fair quality, the cords, when glued into the sawcuts, will resist a good part of the strain commonly supposed to fall on the sewing.

Frequently books are found with the cords literally worn or cut off at the joints, while the sewing is still

good. This is not necessarily a fault of the cords, but may be either a failure to recognize the need of something more than cords and end papers in the joint to secure the book to the covers, or a result of carelessness in beating down the cords when they are laced into the cover-boards; or the use of cords which are too small may be responsible in part for the condition of the joint.

On the other hand, when a book which is sewed on tapes begins to loosen at the joints, the tapes are likely to pull away from the back of the book and thus loosen the sewing as well. For although tapes are stronger than cords, they cannot be so firmly welded into the back of the book. In the case of whipstitched books of ordinary size, neither cords nor tapes are of any special use except to hold the covers.

It is noticeable that publishers sometimes put out library editions of certain titles in which the books are sewed on tapes, in an attempt to meet library requirements. The sewing as done in the bindery employed by a large publishing house will hardly be improved by the use of tapes unless a good grade of thread and extra care in forwarding are combined with the tape sewing. Probably few of the binders in these large establishments understand thoroughly the library requirements or have opportunity for studying ways and means for meeting them; for the library trade constitutes but a small part of their business.

Second Rebinding.—Hundreds of books which were sewed by sections in the first rebinding have been rebound a second time in our bindery, the overcast process of sewing being used. A large proportion of these are titles in fiction whose first popularity is past, which although in little demand are still useful in the library; some are works of non-fiction, many of them still in fair demand and others which have only occasional use. In any case, the books have been saved to the library for the life of the bindings, and

the money which would have gone to replace them if they had been withdrawn now may be used for new titles.

Where a book has been whipstitched or machine-stitched in a previous binding, the inner margins remaining are usually too narrow to make a book that will command respect, and it is usually better to replace it with a new copy.

COVER MATERIALS.

People are said to be judged by the clothes that they wear; and the same principle is true in a certain degree with books, although the frequent remark of readers who insist that they can always tell a good book by its shabbiness, might seem to belie the suggestion.

In deciding how a book shall be bound, the cost, usually penciled after the title-page, is frequently consulted. For as a rule, to put a Grosset & Dunlap edition of a novel, costing less than 50 cents net, in a half morocco binding, or to spend unnecessary time in sewing a 15 or 20-cent Cinderella or Sleeping Beauty, when to stab it will be even better, considering its short life, is obviously unwarranted.

The hard usage of the new and otherwise popular fiction makes it imperative that the binding be first serviceable and then neat and attractive. During the past year considerable leather, largely the moderate-priced grades of the various brands of morocco, has been used in this library for the medium-priced current fiction and juvenile books, but the steady increase in the price of leathers has compelled us to return to a great extent to the use of cloth.

After about two years' trial of Pluviusin (or Gannette) and Fabrikoid for popular books of ordinary size, including juveniles, we have found them satisfactory in the main. The lettering holds well and the books keep their shape and retain their good appearance in general. For juvenile books these waterproof materials are particularly appropriate, as they do not show finger-marks and are not damaged

by a little moisture. The corners do not fray badly with wear, and the books may be washed if desired. A less expensive grade of fabrikoid more nearly proportionate to the value of the books, is being tried on the smaller juveniles, for which the waterproof feature is even more important, if possible, than for the larger books.

Regarding fabrikoid it should be said that because of some shipments in which the odor was offensive, there has been considerable hesitation on the part of some libraries as to its use. The manufacturers are now making a special grade for binding, and it is necessary only to specify the "hard book-finish and odorless" variety to secure a satisfactory material.



BACKING A BOOK

Fiction and other books that are not in special demand, and old books which are rarely used are usually bound in buckram. But where buckram is used for the active circulating books, the backs and corners soon become spongy, the lettering gradually wears away, and the books take on a disreputable appearance.

Perhaps it should be explained that these tales of hard wear and the necessity for iron-clad books apply

in a far less degree to the smaller libraries and to branch libraries in certain classes of communities than to a library in a large city situated in a moist climate and contending with the problem of soft-coal smoke.

Buckram is used to a large extent where the requirements are not so exacting, and with very satisfactory results. In fact, in many localities art vellum is entirely adequate for some of the smaller books for which we use fabrikoid.

The most satisfactory binding for the larger and heavier books which have steady use, including good editions of the standard poets and standard fiction, is a good grade of morocco costing at present from thirty cents per square foot up. The morocco backs usually wear well, and if sides of waterproof cloth are used the books are not easily damaged by moisture or finger marks. The gold lettering remains as long as the books are usable, and the good appearance is retained in a satisfactory degree until the books are worn out.

Art vellum is used for thin books which are not much in demand, and for music where the number of pages does not warrant a heavier material, but where something better than a pressboard is required.

Pressboard, which we buy in tan, reddish brown and pearl gray, is used for covers for thin pamphlets, for music where there are but few pages in a volume, for children's picture-books bought in embossed paper or light-weight pasteboard covers, for reference pamphlets of 50 to 75 pages which are likely to have only occasional use, and even for primers and other easy books whose condition does not justify more expense in the binding. The elimination of the labor of covering the books where pressboard is used results in a considerable saving as compared with the use of other materials.

For the backs of the tan and reddish-brown pressboard covers, fabrikoid or art vellum in bright red or tan is used, while a soft blue art vellum goes well

with the pearl-gray. The use of medium or light shades for the backs makes it possible to letter with carbon paper instead of with gold, which results in a saving of both time and material, the gold being more difficult to apply and far more expensive. The backs are lettered lengthwise on the embossing press either before or after they are put on the pamphlets, as may be most convenient.



CUTTING THE COVER-BOARDS WITH THE BOARD-SHEARS

Leather.—Some librarians have become discouraged with the use of leather for binding. It is not an easy matter always to tell what is good and what is poor, except by years of constant practice and observation in the use of leather. And unless a library owns or controls its bindery, it is not always possible to dictate the quality of materials. Usually the library has a contract schedule of prices for binding which does not permit the use of the better grades

of leather, and the binder must buy what he can, perhaps a few skins at a time and at a disadvantageous price; for the library binding trade is apt to be fitful in quantity of work, in frequency of lots for binding and in specifications of materials. Or if the binder chances to be somewhat calculating and to save himself financially he deliberately furnishes a grade inferior to that agreed upon, the librarian, if not an expert, may be none the wiser until the books show for themselves after a period of service. And so in most cases the library gets what it pays for and no more; which after all is entirely fair.

Leather bindings which are gradually dissolving into reddish dust that leaves its mark wherever it touches, or which are worn or torn away at the top, are a familiar sight in every library. Some are the leather backs in which the books were originally purchased, and others are rebound books, some of them from once-popular binderies whose work has fallen into disfavor in later years. These conditions account largely for the lack of confidence in leather on the part of some librarians. Many binders used to supply roan (dyed sheep) which has a pleasant feel when new, or buffing, which is a thin split of cowhide, instead of the better grades of leather, which cost too much perhaps for the price received for binding.

Knowledge of leather *is* a requisite, in connection with bookbinding, which only years of observation and experience in handling the skins can give. But after all, the last word in leather is never said, for with the different processes of tanning or some other variation in the treatment of the skins which affects the quality, and with the excellent imitations in the grain which are always on the market, the buyer must be continually alert if uniformly suitable qualities are to be maintained.

The prospective purchaser may be assured by the dealer—and truthfully so, probably—that the article under inspection is “real leather.” But while this may be true, the “real leather” may be sheep, either

in the natural color or dyed (roan), a thick enough skin, perhaps, with a soft gloss and pleasant to the touch, but nevertheless, a spongy material of loose fiber, not serviceable for bookbinding. Or it may be a skiver, which is a thin split of sheepskin such as commonly seen on passbooks and which gives way with slight strain.

Of a skin of cowhide three splits are usually made. The outer split is called cowhide, the second is "library cowhide," and the third is "buffing." Only the best cowhide, the outer split, is suitable for binding, although frequently library cowhide and buffing are so used. "Russia leather," which is a Russian cowhide, was formerly considered a superior leather, but in recent years the American cowhide has taken precedence over the Russian.

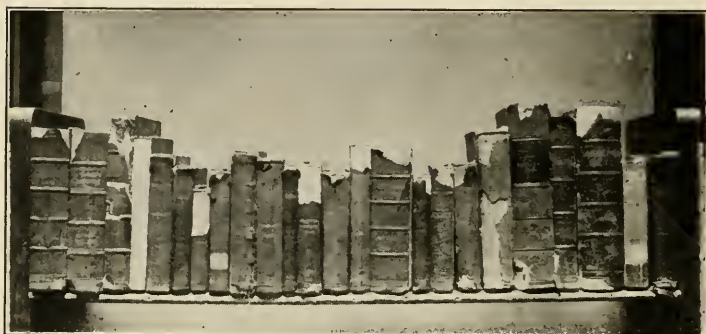
Morocco, which is a goat-skin, has a firm, tough fiber, if properly tanned, the skins varying in thickness and durability according to the grade, and is considered the most suitable leather for binding. This fact has led to the general imitation of the morocco grain on leathers of inferior grades. Quantities of sheepskin and cowhide are stamped by machinery cleverly made for the purpose, with the various grains of morocco, seal, walrus and other superior leathers as desired, often defying any but an expert to detect the imitation.

The most satisfactory way to cope with the leather situation seems to begin at its source; to buy only of reliable dealers and to refuse to accept skins inferior in grade to the samples submitted or to previous shipments.

Old Leather Backs.—The picture of dilapidated backs shown on another page illustrates the futility as a rule of using leather for books, fiction or otherwise, whose first popularity is past or for which there is never great demand. The sewing in these books remains in perfect condition because they have been little used, but the leather backs have deteriorated merely from exposure to air, light, heat, gas, etc., and

not from actual use. The quality of the leather when the binding was new was evidently poor, although doubtless they looked well when first bound and for a year or two afterwards.

Original Covers.—Among the pamphlets and books which are purchased unbound are some which have attractive and even artistic front covers. When the books are bound these covers are pasted on the new front covers, adding materially to the pleasing appearance of the books. This plan is followed to a limited extent in rebinding also, where books have

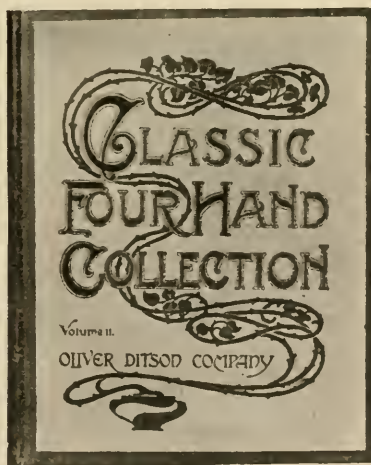
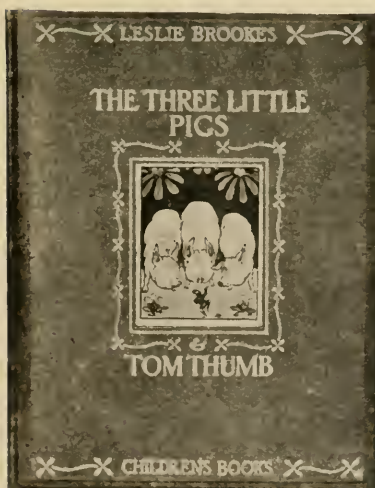
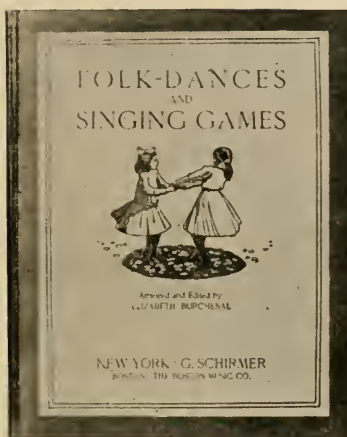
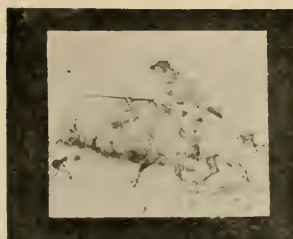


SHEEP, ROAN, BUFFING AND OTHER POOR-GRADE LEATHER BINDINGS IN
THE LAST STAGES OF DECAY

distinctive covers, or where in children's books there are colored illustrations. To provide for this latter class, pictures are saved from withdrawn books and are kept in labeled envelopes or discarded book covers in the bindery, to use as occasion requires. The paper-covered picture books for children are given press-board covers when new, to preserve them, and with appropriate pictures from this collection the books are made live and interesting.

REFERENCE BOOKS.

Every library has the discouraging problem of reference and other books whose leather backs have become disintegrated, though otherwise the books may be in good condition. We strip a book of this character of its back and covers, whip on fly leaves with



FRONT COVERS OF PUBLISHERS' BINDINGS USED ON REBOUND BOOKS

muslin guards and sew in new cords part way, where the old cords are worn off. End papers are sewed on, the ends of the cords are frayed and pasted flat to the back of the book and to the muslin joints, and the book is lightly backed. A strip of canton flannel, wide enough to extend over the back and three-fourths of an inch beyond the muslin joints, is pasted on the back to fasten the book more securely to the cover; the free end sheet and the fly leaf are pasted together and the cloth joint is inserted into the split cover boards. The book may be finished in the regular way, with a loose back. Often the details of procedure must be varied according to the requirements of the individual book.

Then there are the rare old books, frequently out of print, duplicates of which are obtainable only at a high price, while some can hardly be duplicated at any cost. The paper may be heavy or calendered, and ready to crumble with handling, although the text and illustrations may be valuable. Perhaps the leaves are cracking at the joints and the situation looks hopeless, although the binder is expected to make them "as good as new."

In the case of a large art book where text and illustrations are printed on one side only, the heavy leaves are mounted on rather fine, light-weight muslin, pressed carefully and then sewed, the book being covered regularly. For the books of ordinary size where this condition of paper exists, all leaves are mounted on both sides with Japanese crepe tissue. When finished, the presence of the tissue is difficult to detect, and the book is good for years of moderate service. For some reference books having fine print, whose paper is in a precarious condition, the front leaves are mounted on one side with a grade of chiffon obtainable at about fifty cents per yard. Through the chiffon the print shows perfectly.

The mounting of the leaves requires considerable skill. The greatest care must be exercised in selecting paste and brush, in laying on the fragile leaves

and in pressing. If a milky cast shows over the leaf it may be necessary to vary the special formula for the paste in order to remedy the defect.

In the occasional instance of an old book whose paper can not be sewed without breaking or crumbling, but which should be kept in the Library, although seldom used, the back is trimmed with care as for whipstitching. The book is placed in the job backer, sawcuts are made, the back is given a coat of the best flexible glue and cords are laid in the sawcuts while the glue is fresh and the book is still in the vise of the backer. A second coat of glue is thoroughly worked into the back and around the cords in the sawcuts. End papers with good muslin joints are added and the book is slightly rounded and backed with extreme care. The book is held together at the back by the flexible glue, aided by the cords which are thoroughly imbedded and glued into the sawcuts; and with proper care it should last until the paper finally crumbles. An attempt to sew such a book by sections would result in the paper's cracking at the edges of the mending strips necessary to strengthen the folds; or if it were overcast in the ordinary way the sewing would cut the paper and ruin the book.

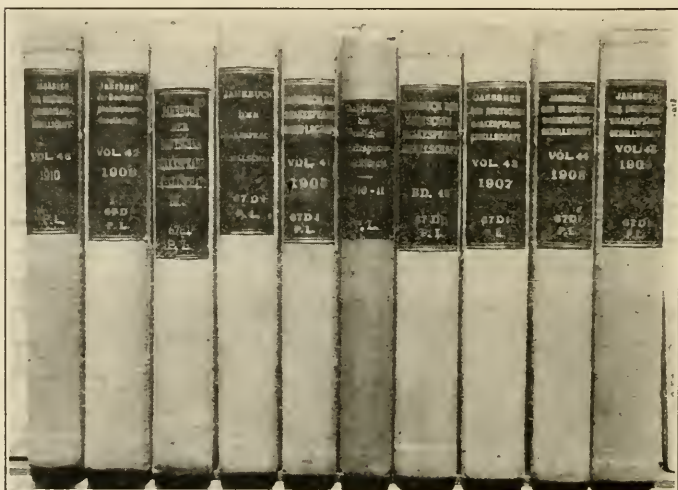
In rare cases where, from the brittle condition of the paper, it may seem impossible to sew the book, the outside of the fold of each section may be stripped with light-weight muslin, and the sections overcast, the muslin strips preventing the thread from cutting through the brittle paper.

When in the process of repairing old books it is found difficult to fasten the covers securely to the book, a tight back sometimes helps to hold book and cover together, though the appearance is not so good as that of a loose back.

The edges of reference books are seldom trimmed in rebinding, being in better condition as a rule than the edges of issuable books. Besides, the margins in many of the large reference books are already too narrow and further trimming endangers the text by making tears more frequent.

SETS.

When one volume of a work of two or more volumes is to be rebound, a note is made, on a slip or card, of the material and color decided upon, with the author, title, volume and accession numbers of the book to be bound. In order that other volumes may be lettered uniformly with this one, a rubbing is made of the back of the book when it is returned from the bindery, unless the binder already has done so by prearrangement. This rubbing is clipped to the card of instructions previously made, and is sent with sub-



SEVERAL VOLUMES OF A LARGE SET REBOUND AT DIFFERENT TIMES BY DIFFERENT BINDERS. MISFITS, FOR WANT OF A PROPER RUBBING.

sequent volumes to be rebound. All cards of instructions, with or without rubbings, are filed alphabetically for convenient reference.

A file of this kind grows rapidly, a few instruction cards being added at a time, and the volumes of sets on the shelves gradually come to look as if they belonged together. The saving of time and the improved appearance of the books on the shelves resulting from such a file make it worthy of a place in a list of efficiency methods. Without some record of the kind

the sets in the library are likely to become an eyesore.

When one of a set, no other volumes of which have been rebound, is received for binding, or when all volumes of a work are to be rebound at the same time, the original cover is taken as a general guide for the new binding, the same color being used where practicable.

When there are in the library duplicate sets of standard fiction, each title in two or more volumes,



A SMALL PART OF A LOT OF LANG FAIRY BOOKS, BOUGHT IN THE SHEETS AND BOUND IN THE LIBRARY BINDERY. THE OPEN SHEET AT THE FRONT SHOWS THE MANNER OF PRINTING, THE PAGES FALLING INTO PROPER ORDER WHEN FOLDED.

as in the case of Dickens, Eliot, Dumas, etc., a standard style of lettering is adopted which obviates the necessity for rubbings; e. g. : Author, 1 1-2 inches from top of book; title, 1 1-2 inches below author; volume number, 1 inch below title.

Libraries usually have a file of instructions for the binding of periodicals and continuations. The binder, whether under the direct supervision of the library or otherwise, keeps rubbings of all these, to insure

uniformity of lettering as the new volumes come for binding. The necessity for rubbings as well as for specific binding instructions is emphasized by the illustration on another page.

In making a rubbing, the lower edge of the paper, which should be rather fine, pliable and of light weight, should be placed exactly even with the lower edge of the book and held firmly in place. The impression is made with a lumber pencil, a carbon pencil, or an ordinary No. 2 pencil having a long point and used sidewise of the lead, if the others are not at hand. Faithful rubbings may be made and yet result in failure as far as uniformity is concerned, if the lower edge is not indicated exactly. The rubbing is laid on the cover, the lower edge being even with the lower edge of the book, and the exact height is marked. Additional instructions may be written on the margin.

When this exact rubbing is made the lettering will show in even lines at the same height as when the books stand on the shelves, and the covers will be of uniform height.

Some binders use the rubbing as a guide for the style of type and spacing only, and set the skiver label, if one is used for the lettering, one inch from the top of the book. Although the variation in height of the different volumes of the set may be slight, the result often will be just irregular enough to offend the eye.

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS.

Besides the regular binding, a large proportion of the collection of music-scores, a lot of 1,000 Lang fairy books purchased in the sheets, and several hundred volumes of the Shakespeare collection which were in need of repair, have been rebound during the past year.

Somewhat more than 1,000 volumes of the collection of music-scores, the first to be taken in hand, were rebound in installments following an expansion of the music classification, which made necessary many changes in the class-numbers, lettered on the

backs of the volumes. This necessity led further to a general overhauling of the collection.

Near the close of 1915 the Library purchased from the publishers a lot of 1,000 Lang "colored" fairy books in the sheets, with original covers separate. They were sewed in the bindery by the special over-cast method adapted to rebinding the Lang books and other books printed on a similar grade of calendered



A TRUCK-LOAD OF THE FINISHED LANG FAIRY BOOKS.
ON TOP ARE SOME WITH THE ORIGINAL COVERS.

paper. The backs were of Niger kid, costing at that time 16 cents per square foot, and in colors appropriate to the titles. The sides were of fabrikoid corresponding in color to the leather backs.

The original front covers were pasted on these fabrikoid sides, and in some cases the original backs were pasted on the leather backs, thus preserving very closely the original appearance of the books.

The sewing in these bindings will hold as long at least as the paper in the books is respectable, for the Lang books have very hard service. The leather backs will ordinarily outwear the paper, whereas the original cloth backs give out with a very few issues. The

original appearance of the books is retained in the main for the life of the book.

Not only will there be no loss of time in the service of the books as formerly, when several weeks might elapse before they could be returned to circulation, but it is possible to bind them to much better advantage in the larger quantity, with consequent saving of expense in labor.

While the sewing of this lot of 1,000 copies was in progress, all the cover boards, leather for backs, fabrikoid for sides, etc., were cut; and the leather backs were lettered on the embossing press—from six to one-



VARIETY IN STYLE OF LETTERING, ILLUSTRATED BY EXAMPLES FROM
THE SHAKESPEARE COLLECTION

hundred copies of one title—before they were put on the books, thus saving the time usually required for lettering after the processes of forwarding are completed.

The first part of the lot was finished in about two weeks and the whole thousand within three weeks. The actual cost, including purchase-price and binding, was about \$1.06 per volume. The cost, however, is but one of the considerations involved in the experi-

ment. The advantages of retaining the original appearance of the books and of uninterrupted service when once in circulation are even more important factors than a saving in the actual cost.

The quality of paper in most of the Lang fairy books is quite unsuited to successful sewing, a condition which is true of much of the calendered paper so much used for illustrations. With the publishers' bindings the sewing is not adapted to the quality of paper and is entirely inadequate for library use; the binding loosens after a brief period that varies in length with the quality of paper in the individual book and with the use. The covers are almost a total loss except where it is possible to use the front again for the new covers of the rebound books. The Yellow fairy book is of particularly heavy paper, and the strain from the mere weight is so great that the sections loosen from the slender threads used in sewing and the book soon falls from the cover.

A concerted appeal from children's librarians, backed by the A. L. A. Committee on Bookbinding and embodying intelligent suggestions as to paper, might result in at least a partial solution of the really serious problem of this large and seemingly indispensable class of children's books.

In anticipation of the library exhibit held in celebration of the Shakespeare Tercentenary, the restoration of the whole Shakespeare collection in the Central Library has been carried on during the past winter. Many rare and valuable old volumes were newly bound, involving days of painstaking repair. The labor of assembling about forty of the old sets and planning for the uniform binding of the volumes in each set, providing at the same time for a pleasing diversity in covers, in the collection of more than 600 books, was no small task. An inspection of the collection now on the shelves would reveal nearly every variation of material, color and style of finish employed in the bindery, from pressboard to full leather with gold edges.

In addition to these three collections, more than one thousand volumes from the Catholic Free Library, which was taken over by the St. Louis Public Library in the winter, are being rebound.

REINFORCING.

There is some difference of opinion regarding the feasibility of reinforcing new books before putting them into circulation. Some books may be successfully reinforced, while for others the labor and expense would be practically wasted. The object of reinforcing is to preserve the books in the original publishers' bindings as long as the covers are usable, with the hope that in some cases the books will not need rebinding. Where this is successfully done, books should circulate from twenty-five to fifty times before rebinding (provided they are not mistreated), the exact number of issues depending on the quality of paper and the publishers' sewing.

It pays to reinforce only books of moderate size, of good or fair quality of paper (not spongy, highly calendered, thick or heavy) and well sewed. All others should be rejected, including small books which are well bound and those which are wire-stitched or stabbed. Before books are taken apart, care should be exercised to make sure that they meet the requirements mentioned.

Our process of reinforcing is as follows: First, the cover is carefully removed from the book. The super and lining are stripped from the back, and fly-leaves are whipstitched to front and back, taking up two or three sections in the sewing. End-sheets are sewed on regularly, and the fly-leaves are pasted to the end-sheets. The back is then treated to a thin coat of flexible glue and is very carefully and lightly backed. If the sewing is broken in the backing, the reinforcement will be a failure. A strip of canton flannel is glued nap-side to the back, extending over on the end-papers about 3-4 inch.

Each cover is reinforced inside about 1-2 inch at the top and bottom of the back with a strip of strong

light-weight binding-cloth about the color of the cover, the strip being slipped under the folded cloth of the cover and extending over on the boards 1-2 inch. This strengthens the points of hardest wear. The book is then returned to the cover and the end-sheets are pasted down as in forwarding, special care being taken with the joints. The book is then put in press for several hours.

Before circulating, the covers of juvenile books are given two thin coats of white shellac, which not only prevents finger-marks from showing, but adds to the wearing quality of the binding-cloth and makes it possible to clean the covers when soiled.

Among the books rejected as unsuited for reinforcing are many which can be issued but a few times before the sewing and covers loosen.

Conspicuous among these are the larger juvenile books printed on heavy or calendered paper and inadequately sewed, but having in many cases very attractive covers. These books are taken apart, resewed by the overcast method and returned to their original covers, which have been strengthened at top and bottom of back, as in reinforcing. Usually the sewing will far outlast the cover, and the book may be given a new cover in the bindery without re-sewing. This method insures the full service of the original cover and of a new cover with but one sewing, although it would hardly be expedient for a library not operating its own bindery.

If the cloth of the covers is found to be of inferior quality, a full fabrikoid cover, or a leather back with fabrikoid sides is made, care being taken that the color combines tastefully with the ornamental front, which is pasted on the new cover. Books treated in this way will seldom be returned for any but slight repairs.

Those books which have light-colored or characterless covers usually are allowed to circulate without attention beyond two coats of shellac.

After experimenting for a little more than a year with reinforcing children's books and returning them

to the publishers' covers, we are still undecided as to the feasibility of mere reinforcing. It seems that for books which are well sewed and are fairly secure in the covers, the difference in the number of issues between the original binding and the reinforcing hardly justifies the expense in labor and the delay. Sometimes the cover breaks at the back after a few issues, while the rest of the book is still good, and the volume must be entirely rebound for that reason. And as obviously it does not pay to reinforce books which are not well sewed, no special advantage in reinforcing is realized. But for those books previously mentioned, which can be issued but a few times, the process of resewing while the book is in perfect condition and the preservation of the cover, whole or in part, have been found to be entirely practicable.

Further observation of the books which have been reinforced during the past year may prove that for many books the mere reinforcing is the economy which some have believed it to be. But for the present, judgment in the matter must be suspended.

PERIODICALS.

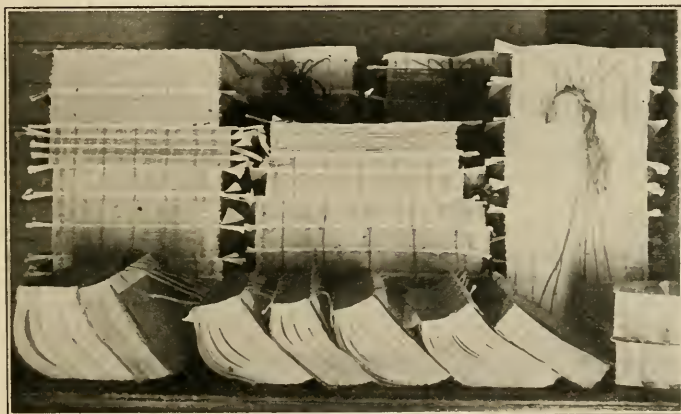
A file of instructions on cards for the binding of all periodicals and other continuations, giving information about indexes, the period covered by each volume, the style of binding, and any special or peculiar arrangement, is kept in the office, and is an indispensable aid in preparing for the binding of periodicals. Individual instruction-slips accompany all volumes and remain with them until the binding is finished and revised.

When magazines have no indexes and the advertisements are discarded, the "contents" leaves of all numbers in the volume are bound, in their proper order, in front, the first one serving as a title page.

Considerable use of covers and advertisements is made in the Library by designers, cartoonists, art students and pupils in the city schools, as well as by searchers for advertisements as such. They are therefore retained and bound with the volumes for the Cen-

tral Reference Department, although they are discarded from all other magazines. The discarded covers are saved to be used by the branches for the same general purpose as for the Reference Department. The notes on Contributors in the *Atlantic Monthly* and *North American Review* are saved and bound with the numbers to which they belong.

Magazines having one or two leaves missing are bound with stubs where the leaves should be. Duplicate notes are made of missing pages, with a record of the branch or department to which the volume belongs. One of these notes is sent to the Catalogue De-



MAGAZINES SEWED ON FIVE CORDS. AT THE FRONT THE BOOKS ARE SHOWN AS SEPARATED, THE CORDS BEING CUT ABOUT AN INCH FROM THE BOOK ON EACH SIDE. THE CORDS OF THE TWO BOOKS AT THE LOWER RIGHT HAVE BEEN FRAYED AND WILL BE PASTED FLAT TO THE MUSLIN JOINTS.

partment, where an order is sent for the desired magazine, and the other is filed in the office so that when the magazine is received the volume may be located and the leaf inserted.

Among the periodicals, changes are going on constantly which affect the libraries, sometimes favorably but often otherwise. One magazine may consolidate with another, retaining its own name but adopting the size of the other magazine. The result is a

conspicuous "jog" on the shelves when the new size begins. Another publisher awakens some morning with the ambitious notion of some sort of change. Perhaps a subscriber has suggested that his publication would be more convenient to handle if issued in a different form, or a change may seem desirable for purposes of illustration. So the magazine comes out in a new size and form with the March number, for example; although the volume runs from January to June.

While this publisher is enlarging his magazine, another is planning just as industriously to reduce the size of his publication. The libraries are fortunate if he is considerate enough to make the change with the beginning of a volume.

Another magazine which has been securely wire-stitched heretofore, suddenly comes out with separate leaves glued together at the back, presumably to admit of flat opening. It is needless to say the leaves do not remain long together, unless some precautionary measures are taken by the library. Fortunately, however, most such publications have resumed the former method of binding after an unsuccessful trial of the experiment.

A most remarkable instance of complicated arrangement is found in the case of a technical periodical published in several sections, having one section paged in Roman numerals, the regular text in Arabic beginning with page 1, a special section paged separately—01 to 024, for example—and a fourth section paged in Roman, beginning in each number of the publication with page LII. The advertisements are paged consistently, beginning afresh with each new number, and the index is intelligently arranged. Here the publishers themselves seem to have realized the situation, for the later volumes are a model of clear and orderly arrangement.

An odd oversight sometimes occurs where the title-page and index of a magazine are found at the end of the last number of the volume, following the text. In-

stead of paging them in Roman numerals or leaving the title-page without pagination, both title page and index are paged to follow the last page of the text. It matters not how much elaborate care has been taken to make an attractive title-page, there is nothing to be done but to bind it as paged and so consign it to oblivion, and convert the first page of the first number on which the volume number is printed into a title page.

FINE BINDINGS.

During the three years of the existence of our library bindery the urgency of the need for simple, substantial bindings adapted to actual service, has allowed little time for fine binding. However, some valuable reference books have afforded opportunity for something out of the ordinary in the way of decoration, and a few books, of local interest for the most part, and of a nature requiring artistic treatment as well as fine materials, have served to demonstrate the skill and ingenuity of the binders.

Illustrations from photographs are given at the beginning of this article, showing some of these books. The Memorial bibliography of Frederick Morgan Crunden, consisting of a list of the papers and addresses of the former Librarian with notes by Dr. Bostwick, and "Scratches," a clever co-operative product of the Catalogue department of the St. Louis Public Library, are bound in full levant morocco, while the Shakespeare Guide has a cover of less expensive morocco. The panel of "Keramic Art of Japan" was saved from the old binding; a full morocco cover, carefully matched, was made and the panel was used as an inset. The tooling conceals the joining. All tooling and lettering were done in gold and by hand. In two of the books a band of gold tooling follows the edge of the leather inside the covers and next to the end-papers, and the edges of the leaves are finished with gold.

LETTERING.

For the good appearance of the book in general, probably no feature is more important than the lettering. It has been our aim to provide type in a few pleasing styles, in which distinctness is always a requisite, and to vary the general forms of lettering somewhat, by different spacing of author and title, by the use or omission of gold bands at the upper and lower edges of the back, by skiver labels of various



LETTERING WITH GOLD BY HAND

colors on some of the larger books where buckram is used, and in divers other ways. The variations in spacing and gold bands are easily managed by finishing all books in one way for perhaps a week or two, and then changing to another style. Other variations depend on the nature of the individual books at hand.

The purpose of the title is to add interest to the book, and while it is well to consider economy in the labor of lettering, this virtue is sometimes overdone. Too strong a trace of the kind of "efficiency" that omits all possible words, leaving only the barest idea

or perhaps none at all—robs the title of all that makes it friendly or intelligible.

However, there is the possibility of eliminating superfluous lettering with due care not to exclude the essentials. Among the extras which are omitted in the St. Louis Public Library are the name of the library, call numbers on English fiction, adult and juvenile (the Library does not use author numbers), and class numbers on Lang “colored” fairy books and on periodicals, which are shelved alphabetically by title.



LETTERING WITH THE EMBOSSING PRESS

A good substitute for gold for lettering is carbon paper. For convenience a sheet of carbon paper is tipped at the edges to a piece of mill-board. The pallet and type are heated as for gold lettering, the type is stamped on the carbon two or three times to “ink” it, and the book is lettered as with gold. No preparation of the book is necessary. Either art vellum or fabrikoid in the lighter shades of red, brown, green or gray, is suitable for carbon lettering, and the results are equally good whether the work is done with an embossing press or by hand. The lettering dries im-

mediately and so does not require the space and handling necessary for ink lettering; and it wears remarkably well. Like ink, however, it does not show distinctly on the darker colors nor on medium blues.

MISSING LEAVES.

Usually a book in the library with one or two missing leaves is as truly crippled and out of commission as a man with a broken arm. Books removed from circulation for this reason are objects for special and immediate attention. To provide for this situation a collection of withdrawn books has been made and is maintained, in which the titles proven by experience to be most often needed for the purpose are well represented. As this collection is shelved in the stack (alphabetically by author), a simple author and title-list on cards is kept in the department office.

In spite of constant watchfulness there are always some books whose missing parts cannot be supplied from this collection nor from the current withdrawals. These books are shelved in the office and a corresponding card list is kept. Occasionally a selection of twenty or thirty volumes is made of those books most needed; perfect copies are secured elsewhere in the Library, the required leaves are copied by the photostat process and the books are soon restored to service. But this process is as expensive as to copy by the typewriter, if not more so, and should be employed only in emergencies or as a last resort.

Now and then, in the case of primers, collections of children's stories, etc., which are freely duplicated throughout the system, the books are returned to circulation in spite of the few missing leaves, the readers losing but little because of one incomplete story among the other complete ones. The less expensive geographical readers, nature and science books are included in this class. Except in the cases of primers and of missing illustrations, a note of the missing parts is penciled on the title page of the book.

CLEANING.

Now and then someone inquires if it is really true that we wash books in the St. Louis Public Library. The idea is by no means new with us, and anyone who makes a fair trial of the experiment will agree that, to a limited extent, the cleaning of books with water is quite logical. Only the occasional book, however, is subjected to this primitive treatment, and usually only the few leaves which are most soiled or the place between two leaves which bears evidence of the presence at some time of candy or egg mingled with cookies or other fancy bakery-goods. Nor has the washing of books been carried into such extensive practice as to require special laundry facilities for the purpose. In fact, our method is very simple—a clean sponge or piece of cheesecloth wrung (not too dry) out of a basin of clean water and industriously though lightly applied to the soiled leaf by one of the repair assistants, quickly produces a clean leaf which is wiped lightly with a soft dry cloth. When the damp leaves are nearly dry the book is carefully closed and pressed. If the book is of calendered paper it is safer to lay sheets of waxed paper between the leaves. If it is necessary to clean the whole book, which should be rarely done, it is better to clean a few leaves at a time, perhaps twenty or thirty, and finish, dry and press these before going farther. Where the book is very badly soiled and its value and the condition otherwise justify the labor, a slight lather of Ivory soap on the sponge or cloth applied to the leaves and rinsed off with clear water, gives good results.

Some kinds of paper do not clean satisfactorily, while others look fresh and wholesome when dried and pressed. The title pages, frontispieces and first few leaves of many books may be restored to respectability by this means. However, this cleaning may be easily carried too far, at the expense of the repair work.

VISITORS' NIGHTS IN THE BINDERY.

The bindery is always a place of lively interest on Visitors' Nights, when the Library is thrown open to the public and when guides are provided to conduct parties of visitors through the building. Some departments not ordinarily open to sight-seers are shown on these occasions, and the bindery is one. Generally two assistants are in charge to explain the work, but occasionally on these open nights the full bindery-force is on duty, giving a very good idea of the work-a-day character of the place and showing in detail the different processes in their natural order. Men and women alike show intelligent interest in the routine of bookbinding, which they may have had little opportunity to see elsewhere. But the groups of children, perhaps thirty to forty in number, from the schools and other institutions of the city and duly chaperoned, are among the most enthusiastic visitors. The mechanical character of the work, which in a general way they understand at sight, together with the spectacle of large numbers of books passing through the actual processes, methodically and rapidly, regard-



A FEW MINUTES FOR RECREATION AT NOON

less of the presence of a bevy of eager children at the elbows of the workers, absorbs the attention. The trimming of the books in the big cutter, the work of the men at the gluing-machine where the books are covered, the piles of books already sewed as they come from the sewing benches, and the lettering, either by hand or with the embossing press, are watched with curious and admiring eyes, and some linger for one more look after the others are gone. Usually the children are required to write descriptions of some of the things that they have seen, for class-work the following day.

Occasionally also classes from the schools, on their day tours among the large institutions and business places of the city, visit the library and the bindery.

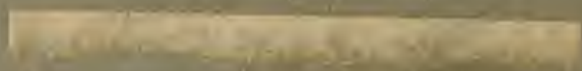
CONCLUSION.

The organization and development of the bindery has been carried on in the face of many difficulties, which only unremitting labor could even partially overcome. The discouraging situation of thousands of books to be bound and the impossibility of binding any but those in most urgent need, with the growth of circulation making more and more imperative demands on the capacity of the bindery, has made doubly necessary a continual contriving and planning towards the production of the best binding for the largest number of books at the least cost.

It has been most gratifying to see on the part of assistants, both in the office of the department and in the bindery, evidence of genuine interest and pride in the work and of ambition to improve it and even to excel in it.

Especial acknowledgment is due to the foreman, Mr. Oscar R. Haeckel, whose selection of the equipment has resulted in a considerable cash saving and whose systematic management and untiring interest in his work have been in a large degree responsible for the satisfactory development of the bindery.

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